

Official Minutes for Webb County Commissioners Court Special Meeting

Monday, November 15, 2004 at 1:30 PM

(Approved 12-13-2004)

- Item No. 1 Call to order by Judge Louis H. Bruni
Let it be remembered that a regular meeting of the Webb County Commissioners Court was held at 1:00 p.m. at the special meeting place with the following members present to wit:

Louis H. Bruni	County Judge
Judith Gutierrez	Commissioner, Pct. 2
David Cortez	Commissioner, Pct. 4

Not Present:

Jerry Vasquez	Commissioner, Pct. 1
Felix Velasquez	Commissioner, Pct. 3

Thus constituting a quorum, the Commissioners Court proceeded to act upon the Agenda as posted in the meeting notice of the 10th of November 2004. Present also were Ms. Nora Elia Prado, Deputy County Clerk representing Mrs. Margie Ramirez Ibarra, Ex-officio Clerk of the Commissioners Court, various officers and others interested in the business of the Court.

- Item No. 2 Roll Call – Margie Ramirez Ibarra, Webb County Clerk

- Item No. 3 Pledge of Allegiance – Led by Cmr. Gutierrez

- Item No. 4 Communications

Judge Bruni expressed his sympathies to Cmr. Vasquez whose mother passed away last week. He wished his family the best in the mourning of this tragedy. He stated that with birth comes death and it is always unexpected when death occurs.

Cmr. Gutierrez stated that she will be greatly missed and sends her sympathies to Cmr. Vasquez's family. She stated that she was a very positive person and always looked at the best side of things.

Cmr. Cortez stated that it is very difficult to lose a family member, especially a mother. He stated that the God needed her and that she would now rest in peace.

Silent moment of prayer was observed.

- Item No. 5 Public Comment

Judge Bruni stated that Ms. Aurora Hernandez was present to address the court on the Self Help Center and would like court's concurrence to allow her to speak. Cmr. Cortez stated that this would be an exception since comments can only be taken on items on the agenda. Cmr. Gutierrez stated that they did not want to set a precedent but would allow Ms. Hernandez to speak.

Ms. Aurora Hernandez stated that she went to the Self Help Center to apply for a program for home rehabilitation run by Ms. Martha Waters at Los Altos. She stated that she lived in El Cenizo and had applied for the program in April. She stated that she has been trying to get a hold of Ms. Waters on whether she qualified and was barely able to contact her earlier this month. She stated that she has applied for similar programs through the CAA but was denied due to the condition of her home. Her husband was diagnosed with acute lymphoma leukemia and her home is in bad condition. She is requesting assistance from the court in this matter because of her husband's illness and the welfare of her children.

Judge Bruni advised Ms. Hernandez to speak with Ms. Sara Jo Davila, Constituent Relations Officer, to submit a written report on this matter.

Item No. 6 Discussion and possible action to canvass the results of the General Election for Federal, State, District, County, and Precinct officers held on the 2nd day of November 2004.

Mr. Oscar Villarreal, Interim Elections Administrator, submitted his reports for the November 2nd election. His report included the following:

1. Return Sheet – Total votes received by each candidate
2. Summary group report detail – Total votes received by each candidate with over/under votes and breakdown of early votes, Election Day votes, Provisional and overseas votes
3. Canvas Report – All precincts for each race
4. Spreadsheet – Combined spreadsheet of above reports.

He stated that this was the first year that provisional ballots were used due to the Help America Vote Act. He stated that these were used by persons who had problems with their registration, including some that had registered at the D.P.S Office. He stated that those who had problems with their applications or whose applications were lost were able to submit a provisional ballot. If it was qualified and verified, those votes were counted. He stated that a total of 23 provisional ballots were qualified and counted and his office also received 15 military overseas ballots.

He also stated that following statistics to the court:

- 97,081 registered voters
- 42,030 voters (43.35% turnout)
- 10,000 more voters than 2000 General Election
- 1 Precinct had 100% voter turnout (Pct. 356 – two registered voters)
- 4 precincts with 60-69% voter turnout

- 9 precincts with 50-59% voter turnout
- 24 precincts with 30-39% voter turnout
- 2 precincts with 20-29% voter turnout
- 54.6% female voters; 44.7% male voters

He stated that this was a very good turnout with most precincts on the north side with higher turnout. He stated that the precinct chairs run in the primary and a list of them can be requested from the party chairs. He stated that he would be preparing a report on the targeted age group of 18-25.

Cmr. Gutierrez commended Mr. Villarreal for a very smooth election. She stated that this age group was very important.

Judge Bruni congratulated Mr. Villarreal for a great job and looked forward to next election. He stated that he would also like a breakdown of the demographics since the youth group is more informed on who they want to represent them. He stated that he would be calling a meeting of the Elections Commission to review the applicants for the Elections Administrator position.

Mr. Villarreal stated that the next election is for May 2005 in which L.I.S.D. and U.I.S.D. board members will be elected. He stated that during the off season, his office works on the 5,000 corrections/new applications submitted by voters on Election Day and will be purging the system on November 30th for those voters whose certificates were returned and who had not voted in two general elections. He invited the public to come by his office if they did not receive their certificates within the following 15 days so that they will not be purged from the list. He stated that for the 2006 elections, as per the HAVA Act, each precinct will be required to have DRE's (Direct Recording Election Equipment) which would allow the public to vote electronically. He stated that he was working on having the vendors approved by the State of Texas make a presentation on December 7th. He stated that this is mandated by the Federal Government which would be covering the cost for the new equipment.

Cmr. Cortez stated that he would like to continue the voter registration drives and would like to have the voter registration cards available at local business so that new employees can register to vote when they are hired.

Cmr. Gutierrez motioned to approve item as submitted. Cmr. Cortez seconded the motion.

Motion carried 3-0 with Cmr. Vasquez and Cmr. Velasquez not present.

Item No. 7 Adjournment

Cmr. Gutierrez motioned to adjourn. Cmr. Cortez seconded the motion.

Motion carried 3-0 with Cmr. Vasquez and Cmr. Velasquez not present.